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AUTHOR Esp, Barbarann; Torelli, Alexis
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ABSTRACT

The special studies program at Hofstra University is designed for high school graduates applying to the university whose educational backgrounds require a more personalized approach to introductory college work. An attempt is made to minimize the risk of poor academic performance during the first year in college. A random sample of 24 students in the program was interviewed in early 1977. The instrument was a 19-item combination questionnaire and interview schedule; a copy is appended to the report. The questionnaire surveyed: academic interest area, employment status and hours, on-campus or commuter status, educational aspirations, the personal importance of certain program activities, and areas for more help or advice. Interview responses are presented on these elements of the special studies program: team teaching in the core course; the four-day week; the eight-week courses; status as a probationary student; individual conferences with a faculty member at the end of each course; faculty-student interaction; faculty as role models; interaction among students within and outside the program; the writing workshops; desired changes in the program; and the program's greatest benefits for the individual student. Analysis of the responses is restricted to a brief summary. (MSE)

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Analysis of the Special Studies Program Based on the Interviews of Its Students

Barbarann Esp
Research Associate

Alexis Torelli
Research Assistant

New College Educational Research Office
Hofstra University
Hempstead, New York
11550

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INTRODUCTION

The Special Studies Program at Hofstra University is designed for high school graduates applying to the University whose educational backgrounds require a more personalized approach to introductory collegiate work. The Division of Special Studies attempts to minimize the risk of poor academic performance by students during their first year in college, and to prepare the student for full participation in one of the degree - granting undergraduate programs at the University by the beginning of their sophomore year.

During November 1976, a number of faculty members of the Division of Special Studies met with the senior researcher, to discuss a qualitative evaluation of the program. The various issues raised during that meeting formed the basis of the evaluation.

A note of thanks should go to Alexis Torelli, the research assistant for this project. Armed with a tape recorder and important human relations skills, she devoted many hours to this project. Above all, a special thanks should go to all the students who were interviewed. Their willingness to share their hopes, desires, and disappointments made this project a success.

INSTRUMENT

The instrument was a nineteen item combination questionnaire and interview schedule. The first eight items requested demographic and attitude information. The remaining items were open-ended questions referring to specific Special Studies Program activities. A copy of the instrument appears in Appendix A.

PROCEDURES

A random sample of thirty students, currently attending the Special Studies Program, was selected for interviews. Students were interviewed during the period February to May, 1977. Before each interview, the student was assured that his/her answers would remain anonymous. A total of twenty-four students were interviewed.

RESULTS

1. What is your academic area of interest?

AREA	PERCENT
Engineering	2
Pre- Med	2
Pre- Legal	4
Theatre Arts; communication	30
Business	2
Sociology	4
Education	2
Psychology	21
None	12
Undecided	21

2. Employment status.

JOB TITLE	PERCENT
Lab technician	2
cashier	4
Golf caddy	2
Student aid	12
Not employed	80

Hours worked per week: Range was from 2 hours to 27 hours with an average of 14 hours per week.

3. Dorm/commuter status:

Live in dorm = 86 %

Commute = 14 %

4. Educational Aspirations.

LEVEL OF EDUCATION	PERCENT
Plan to get B.A. only	76 %
Plan on professional school	15 %
Plan on Master's degree	6 %
Plan on Ph.D. or Ed.D.	0
Other: Associate's degree	4 %
Uncertain	4 %

5. In terms of your personal satisfaction, how important are the following Special Studies Program activities? (percentage response)

ACTIVITY	Important	Don't Know; Can't decide	Not Important
Discussing ideas with faculty	92	4	4
Discussing ideas with fellow students	83	7	10
Personal and social relationships with other students	89	5	6
The Core Course	85	2	13
Close student-faculty relationships	83	7	10
Rewriting papers, exams, etc.	86	8	6
Signing a contract at beginning of program	3	26	71
Credit/no credit grading system	71	6	23
Peer teachers	5	6	89
Required attendance in classes	71	3	26

6. In what areas do you feel you need more help or advice?

AREA	PERCENT
Developing study habits/organizing time	82
Planning an academic program	74
Choosing a major or vocation	63
Personal and social relations	6
Increasing writing skills	12
Personal problems	2
Planning for after you leave Special Studies	74

Interview Question # 1

"How do you feel about team teaching in the Core Course?"

"It's too short. And as soon as you begin to understand one teacher, then you switch to something else. You have four different disciplines and I just think the Core Course is much too short."

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"I think team teaching is a good thing because it exposes the students to various teaching styles. It also encourages them to be familiar with different forms of writing. There are certain drawbacks to it, though. I feel that maybe one or two, maybe two teachers are too demanding on the students as far as the writing requirements are concerned. Especially for a course like Core. I spoke with one of the faculty advisors about it and he said that in a Core course this degree of toughness which teachers impose upon the students should be held because it encourages them to work hard if they go on into main campus or New College."

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"I think that was really good because you get different aspects. Even though one teacher is focused on one point, the other teachers can give in their points of view and it makes the class more interesting too."

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"It's a good idea cause it offers different sorts of opinions and different points of view. Some teachers come in and lecture too much--it's too set. They don't have room for discussions or anything. It's hard cause the class is too big, but it would help if you could discuss things a little."

****

"I think it's a good idea because you get a variety of teachers and I think it gives you a good outlook on different subjects, you know the way they teach one subject from different points of view. I think it makes it more interesting."

****

"I think team teaching is good but because they all concentrated in a different area--that's why it was good because of the specialization in a different area--but it was like too much to absorb. One professor could have spoke in a quarter instead of squeezing four teachers in a quarter--you know what I'm saying? It was too rushed and it was too much for the student to put all that he has into it. I don't think I like team teaching too much."

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"I don't think it really helps, like each teacher in a sense contributes...I don't think it helps that much. The other teachers don't contribute that much to the discussion."

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"I think it is a very good program. It offers like a broad spectrum for sources of information that you can go to and gives additional perspectives of the teachers themselves, as well. The styles are different and if one doesn't really accommodate to your needs and desires, the other one will. The chances are just more better. And really like, if you don't really want to talk to a teacher about something, you can go to the one you like and most likely you can rap about that because they each teach like a different specific thing. So it offers you a vaster area."

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"I thought it was definitely of use, but some parts of it I didn't like. It gave a chance for each professor to do his thing. I thought it was good...

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"I think team teaching is good. You get to meet a lot of new personalities. You get to handle each professor's personality. I think the people in Core A were more together, I don't know, more professional. I like Core A better than Core B. Core B, they made us feel like we were in high school, having to be on time for class. You couldn't come into the middle. They put a sign outside the door, "Not allowed in any more." Like Core A was much more relaxed; Core B from the first day they started with all the rules and regulations, it turned everybody right off."

****

"About team teaching? I think that it is a good idea because you get, a lot of times you get discussions between the other professors in the course and you'll get varied ideas. A lot of times you'll get two professors who'll disagree which is good because you get both sides of the coin.?

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"I thought it was good because you got to meet more of the faculty at one time, you can relate to all of them because everything is discussed in the courses were, each thing tied in all together. It was good.

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"Now in some cases...it <u>can</u> hurt having other teachers there. It doesn't always achieve anything because they respond even though there's nothing to be said."

****

"Team teaching I like. Team teaching, the way they work it is good. If you had a question to ask, one professor would give you one aspect--like I remember arguing with Ignacio over television; he would give his view on why he was anti-television. I'm for television and would argue for it. We would, like, reach a stalemate, and so then, Professor Grossman would come in with his psychology and explain the harmful and helpful aspects of it. Team teaching I like. I thought it was helpful."

****

"It gives you a wider variety, a wider variety of classes but it also limits the time that you have to learn each particular area. In other words, there's four teachers in the Core Course and it's an eight week period, so it's structured two weeks and it's really hard and sometimes you know, you get into a discussion group or something. It's really hard to condense all the material that you're supposed to learn with room for discussion and classroom participation."

****

"I don't like the Core Course. Team teaching is good if you have the time. Team teaching is good if you spend more than six days on each subject. Based on six days, what can you learn in six days? I learned very little in those six days of each and it was ridiculous. And they learned more by talking about it themselves than we did. There's fifty students in each Core and it's, you have six days and you go over things you don't know and on the second or third day you're in to what you're doing, and just when you start to read your book, or this or that, it ends. Then you have to write this very good paper for them and you don't know what to write on because in six days you don't have anything to write on and then you have to rewrite it. Well, what happens is that you get a paper and they don't like it, so you have to rewrite it. And as you'll rewrite the paper, you get a new one. If it just so happens that they didn't like the rewrite, they have a third rewrite and possibly a rewrite from the second paper and then you just have the third new paper. That's "rab." But it does happen and it's ridiculous. After a while you can't write any better on what you're writing on. It's not that you personally cannot write any better but that you can get bored with it. For if you have only six days, you can learn only so much. And you're just learning what you wrote in different forms, and they just, how do I put it, they're not going to like it whatever you write because you're not going to change what you write and you really can't change how you write it. Plus within six days or like a day or so, you can't change your whole style. And rewrites, I can see one rewrite, not more than one because after that you get fed up with it and you don't want to do it. Team teaching is good if you have to have more time but I don't think it is necessary to have more time. Fifty students in a Core Course is ridiculous because New College prides itself on its closeness with the students and how are you going to be close in a class of fifty students? They are so cramped for time it's ridiculous. You can't enjoy the class, you're always pushing to finish your work. I don't think I learned a thing from the Core Course. I think they should be cut out. They should have a mandatory course on how to study. And how to plant your rear end down at the desk because I'm on the verge of failing a course because I don't sit down and do the work. I mean I sat down with a sophomore, or was he a junior? He was a sophomore and he read three books, four books, and he didn't know what he was reading. So I sat down and I showed him what he was doing. Now I must know what the work is, I just can't sit down and do the work. And that's what they should have, a course on how to do your work."

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"I think it's good because if one teacher isn't such a good teacher then maybe the other kind of compensates for her?"

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"I thought it was good but the time we had for each particular topic was kind of short. Like sometimes you went to the library for a certain thing, and you knew there was only one week for you to do a certain thing. But I liked it. Sometimes I thought I was being looked over by the rest of the teachers, but it was pretty good."

****

"The first Core I liked, it was interesting. But the second Core, I didn't like. It was four teachers and they were each teaching their own thing and they expected you to get into theirs. You know how sometimes you can take a course and sometimes get into it and sometimes not, but when you took that second Core, it wasn't like one class. It was like four individual classes that each teacher wanted individual attention. They didn't want it put into one."

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"I think it's a pretty good idea, I mean, you know, you're just out of high school and you need a lot of help. With three teachers you can get the time. I think it's good."

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"Team teaching in the Core Course is sometimes beneficial but some students like to get to know one professor at a time instead of having many of them--you know--teach different things."

****

"I feel that team teaching...as it turns out, I really didn't catch the notion of team taught classes until after they were over. Because basically a lot of what they called inter-related studies had to be inter-related by your own imagination and weren't really that bound. I felt that there were some units of the course that were totally incomprehensible and really didn't belong in there...I guess they were interdisciplinary courses because they were hitting philosophy, psychology, history and art. They were trying to hit four areas and sometimes they did a poor job as in Core I. Core II was a little more comprehensive and a little more relevant."

****

"I think it's a good idea, but I think the Core Course stinks because when I got here I was under the impression that it was gonna be a real small group. But as it turned out, there were fifty to sixty people in the Core Course. This was a real drag 'cause you couldn't get any stuff going; people were like hiding in the back. Even with team teaching you still really had maybe one at a time. I guess they added more teachers with a larger amount of students, it didn't work out. It just didn't work out."

****

"It was O.K. I mean I can't say anything bad about it. I guess my biggest feeling about it was that some teachers were good while others were bad. Some were very boring in my opinion--they really dragged on. I think a good idea was that they each had a special thing they knew and it was a good idea because you didn't have them talking about things they didn't know. I know, I've had teachers like that in other years. They sit there and try to tell you about things they don't know about. I can say that a lot of the course work I did not like. My roommate is a psychology major and I look at the stuff he's doing and he really loves it. I look at it and think, "you're crazy." I just don't like psychology, philosophy...I like the practical stuff that actually works and I guess that's why I'm into drama, communications."

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Interview Question # 2

"How do you feel about the four day week?"

"It was good. What more can be said?"

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"I think it's good. You have the break in between the week when you can write papers or whatever. I think it's necessary."

****

"I love having Wednesdays off. It breaks it up--to go to school for two days and have a break."

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"I really liked it. It gives you a day to--if you have work--to catch up on your work, or go ahead of it. If you don't have any work, it gives you a day to rest and think about what you're doing. So I liked it."

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"I like the four day week because it's nice having a day off. Because now, I have school five days a week and like, three of my days I get off at 12 but still, I hate it because it is too much. It's really good to have a day off because on Saturday and Sunday I really don't spend that much time doing work."

****

"The four day week is great. It's fine. If they can't work it any other way with the amount of time they have and having classes an hour and a half a day, I guess they should have it on Wednesday. If it was on Monday or Friday, no one would do their work."

****

"Um...it depends. If I have money then it means I can go skiing. I like it. Even now I try to schedule my classes so that I can do work and have time for personal things in between. Wednesdays were an important day to spend just reading."

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"I think it's great. That is one thing that is really good because you get a break right in the middle of the week."

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"I thought it was great. It helped to have that Wednesday off in the middle of the week. You know you get yourself together again. I'd like to have it Friday, but you can't have everything."

****

"It was great cause on Wednesdays you could take off. You were supposed to be studying on those days and I usually didn't except if I had a big paper due. I don't know about other people. I'm sure there's people who did use it to study."

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"It's very very good because it enables the student to just rest, lay back, and like get his thing together. It's like situated perfectly in the middle of the week."

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"Well, I can deal with classes from a better perspective 'cause of the four day week. I think that they tried to cram a lot of work into a quarter that can really be spread into a semester."

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"That I like. That was to me a really decent idea. It broke you up in the middle--gave you a chance to get things done in the middle. It was almost like a second weekend. If you had work, you could catch up with it. That came in handy. I wish the campus would run on it."

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"It's good. I get to work on Wednesdays. It's good."

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"I think it's good, and I like it on Wednesday too because if it was on Friday, like I know some schools have, you don't seem to get your work done. It's a three day weekend. But Wednesday is a good time to sit down and do the work you have to do."

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"That's good. I definitely like it--no classes."

****

"I like the four day week. The only thing I didn't like was the length of the classes but I guess they have to have that long a class if you're meeting four days a week. I like the idea of Wednesdays off, although I think that Friday would be a better deal. But it was pretty decent. That's one of the better aspects of New College in general."

****

"The four day week is really good...it gives you a day to study and to catch up on what you have to do."

****

"I feel that it should be longer. I think it should be a five day week instead of a four day week. Because you come in the first two days and then there's a day off and then you come in the next two days. You're coming in and out. I

think that one day that's in between cuts out some of the vital time that's needed for studying and one of the reasons for some of the rewrites in the Core is that, due to the time lost, the students could have picked up some more knowledge about the area they were pursuing."

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"It's excellent. Well most of my classes are outside of New College now, but they give you time to catch up on work and it's really good. That's the best part about it."

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"That was good. That was enjoyable 'cause I started taking chorus and that was on Wednesday. It gave me a chance to catch up on my work that I may have been delinquent on the other days."

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Interview Question # 3

"How do you feel about eight week courses?"

"I think it is great. That is one thing which is really great because you get to put all your energies into one or two areas of study, rather than having to spread yourself thinly over maybe five courses over sixteen weeks."

****

"Eight week courses are good in the sense that you are taking less courses at the same time. You can devote more time to them. But there's a problem if you are taking semester length courses at the same time because the term papers and finals pile up."

****

"Eight week courses are fine and good, and I had this Professor, Professor _____. The guy was a nice guy--he was always nice and he never did anything against me intentionally but as I knew more people here, I found out on main campus they do half the work. I did 23 chapters in eight weeks and they did 11 chapters in sixteen weeks. So I double the amount of work and half of the time. With another professor we had three papers we had to do and I did them all. She didn't get to mark them until after the vacation and the class ended just before. And now, I am rewriting a paper I had back then."

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"I thought it was good because it gave me a break."

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"You put a lot of work into those eight week courses but it made you work hard and you knew what you were doing afterwards."

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"The eight week thing is advantageous from the point of view that it goes a lot faster. You know, you get done and you don't get bored with the course. But at the same time, it's all crammed into eight weeks and it's like....I got finished with midterms and I have finals a week from tomorrow and I don't know where to start. It just goes really fast and sometimes you're just not ready for it."

****

"This is good too because if you got into a course and it wasn't that good, you knew it was only for eight weeks."

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"I like the eight week courses. The problem is the time 'cause you're concentrating on a lot of different things into eight weeks. But basically I liked it.

You don't get bored with the subject so easily."

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"Eight week courses are o.k. but I'd rather go to a semester. Eight weeks is too compact. Like it's individualized study and if you fall behind, you know..."

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"I like them."

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"The eight week courses? I think the courses should be longer. It should be a semester. You know they really pile up with a lot of homework. And when you get out of Special Studies you are not going to work that hard on Hofstra Main Campus and the tendency is just to goof off."

****

"I think they should have had semester length courses so that each teacher would have more time."

****

"Well, personally I like eight week courses because you learn a lot more in a short period of time. It's easier to go back and take your midterm and final 'cause you're always reviewing for it. It's because you're constantly taking the course. In long session courses they only have it a couple of times a week and then you have to go back over a whole semester for your final which I think is harder. You also get to take more courses in a year."

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"I like them better than regular because you get to concentrate...a couple more hours of studying...I guess."

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"I didn't like that for the simple reason that it wasn't long enough. You couldn't get enough in. No way. It seemed like a great idea when I first heard it. But it just didn't work."

****

"I don't like the eight week courses. It's not enough time. Do you know what I'm saying? They are trying to teach too much in too little time. The subjects and things that I've learned could have gone into much greater depth in a longer period of time."

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"The eight week course is good. It is short and you can jump onto the next thing and at least, you know, you can sort of hop on. You can cue into a course for eight weeks but then after that, there's so much a teacher can do in the way they present it to you. And you can read on your own and do other things."

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"It depends upon the class. Sometimes, like this class I'm taking now, you need more time than eight weeks. We could probably go further with some of the projects but we're going to have to stop. I guess it depends on the class."

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"When I went into college, I didn't know what was going to go on. I was really up in the air about everything. The eight week courses are good."

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"Eight week courses don't give you enough time to really feel something out. Right now I'm on main campus and I take full semester courses. I like main campus much better than Special Studies."

****

"Um...It's...well, you know, it's all right. You have to combine a lot of work in eight weeks. They should...discuss things in general more than in specifics."

****

"I feel similar to what other kids feel, and to what a lot of professors feel. The sessions are very short. In an eight week time span they have to move at a very progressive speed."

****

"Eight week courses are good and they are bad. They are bad in that they seem to cram everything into a short time. They really don't go into enough depth. Not enough time to study anything."

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Interview Question # 4

"How do you feel about being a probationary student?"

"It put pressures on me. It was very good--it was great. It put hassles on me. It put provisions on me that I had to go by but it gave me a chance to catch up and that's why I was there. So of course, I loved it."

****

"I don't like it because I felt a lot of pressures on me. And I don't like the fact that someone can say I can stay and if I leave--I would like that decision to be left up to me. I came here knowing that I was on a probationary period, and as things turned out, I still didn't do too well. At least not as well as I know I could do. I think that the pressures of knowing that someone can drop you at any time puts more pressures on you.

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"I never really thought about the thing with the contract. I just did the work that I was supposed to do. I figured that this was school and you're supposed to do work. It never made me upset thinking that I was on probation or whatever."

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"I think I deserved it. Considering the way I came into this school, I think I got off easy. I'd kiss the floor and everything. I mean to have someone like me come in here, considering how I screwed up in high school, and tell him he's been accepted period--that's ridiculous."

****

"I don't know. I haven't thought about it that much. Every once in awhile it comes to me. My dad is constantly on my back: "Get your rear end moving or you're not gonna get through this semester." It came to me I guess in intersession when my papers were returned to me and a lot of them had been rejected. But it's not like it's been in my mind...I just laugh about it and go to school."

****

"I feel nervous about being on probation..."Cause you know you have to do something and it's an impossibility. You have no choice but to get kicked out."

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"I feel it is an insult to my intelligence. The first semester, one professor told me despite my 87 test average in the class, I would never make it in that class and I would never make it in school. The teacher had a very boring class and I sleep through it. Everything the teacher said I got from the book. The instructor had a rotten attitude toward me as I had toward her. She told me I'd never make it on main campus. This semester my grade average is either an A or B in all four classes--so maybe I'll send her a copy of my report card. Being a probationary student is basically an insult. It's like a big tag hanging off of me. But it's something I can live with. I don't see why it should keep me

from doing anything. It's just a stigma added by the little micro-society tucked off in Barnard Hall."

****

"I am? Oh boy! I don't know. I didn't really think of it in that way before. But in a way it's good because it gives you a little bit of extra motivation. Especially for the people in Special Studies because they're there in the first place because they need motivation."

****

"I don't know--explain it...(term explained)...Well...it's necessary because of the condition I'm admitted under. It's vital for their program. It made me paranoid about missing class or handing in a paper late--in the beginning. But I realized that when I went into Main Campus that everyone's not "Joe College" and totally into academics."

****

"I don't like it because I feel they can always tell me to leave. Well...it doesn't bother me too much. I'm going to do the work whether I am or not. But they kind of have you. You have no say so and they have too many faults in the teaching system in order to have me as a probationary student. Like don't screw up and blame it on me. Like don't have the Core Course and then say I did bad in it. You know...it's ridiculous."

****

"It makes me think about what I want to do and how I'm doing now. And even what I'm not doing as far as work sometimes. But you begin to feel after ahile that you're someone special--where you're being watched over in a certain way. That personally gives me an uncomfortable feeling 'cause I don't like to be watched over. I like being independent. But I don't mind being on probation so to speak. It gives me a chance to prove something to myself...and I don't know if I'll ever be fulfilled in college because I'm a strange person."

****

"I'm not disturbed about being under probation. I think that it's a justified thing. It's understood that when a student enters the program he is on probation. It doesn't disturb me much because I'm doing well. If I wasn't doing well then I would be upset. I think it's good. It keeps kids on their toes. Kids going through school should be on probation all through college because some of them tend to goof off a little bit. But I guess that's human nature."

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"I don't like it...stinks."

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"I don't know if I like it one way or the other. Am I supposed to?"

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"It doesn't really matter to me. Like being on probation means that if I don't do well enough I won't come back. But I screwed up enough in high school to know I've got to do better now. I will pass everything and I'll be back."

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"It didn't bother me. I took it as it came."

****

"I don't feel any different. I don't act any different. I don't find myself watching what I do or what I say. Once I got into the routine it didn't make any difference."

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"It gives you an incentive because you know if you flunk out it will be bad. I know I got in because I couldn't get in any place else. It was either Special Studies or Nassau Community College which made me nauseous. The idea of going to school in an Army barracks really turned me off. It's not really stressed that much in the program. It really isn't. You really don't feel as if you are on probation."

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"Uh...no, I mean I've never really thought about it...I don't want to answer."

****

"There is a certain feeling about it. You know...a lot of people won't admit they're in Special Studies once they've gotten out. It's because they are afraid that people might have that attitude; oh, you're a bunch of sweat hogs that couldn't make it anywhere else. A lot of people, surprisingly enough aren't ashamed."

****

"I don't know. I never really thought about it. It kind of encourages you to work because you know that you're on probation. You have to do your best."

****

"Being a probationary student I really don't like. It's a lot harder being a probationary student because I'm not allowed to get a C--I mean anything lower than a C. C and above is fine. But at the same time it's just like, you know, in the back of your mind that you're being watched if you get that D."

****

"It bothers me sometimes. I just have to look at it--I'm here and doing my best but now it's getting better as it comes to the end. But it never bothered me before. It's just now as it all comes to an end."

****

"See right now I don't know if my head's going to be chopped off or not. Sometimes you forget about it. But if you take a Main Campus course and the teacher

finds out you're on probation it's not good."

****

"I feel o.k. about it. Am I still one? I do pretty good so I guess I'll be o.k. I don't have a complex or anything like that."

****

Interview Question # 5

"How do you feel about individual conferences with each faculty member at the end of a course?"

"The only thing that I regret is that the faculty member should get on a more personal level with the student. Like in my case, for instance, I didn't make the move to be friendly with teachers in high school or whatever. But I think it would have a better effect if each teacher could talk to each student in their class on a personal basis. I think that's the idea of SSP anyway."

****

"It's good because you can talk out. I had only one. I never had any other ones. There wasn't one at the end of the second core and the first core I was doing re-writes on the exams. I just handed them in."

****

"I think they're good. I think that the evaluations are good also because they let you know where you stand. Sometimes you're not sure."

****

"I like the idea because some of the professors seem to be on top of it. One professor would hold conferences for writing improvement. I don't want to name names but there were some professors who didn't take much interest and who hold personal vendettas against students. They are very subjective in their analysis."

****

"I only had one. I think it's good to have a conference with the teacher at the end of the semester. Sometimes it would be more help if you had it in the middle of the session so you could discuss any problems you had. I personally would like to have more conferences so that at the last minute I'm not loaded down with work that you didn't know you had to do before."

****

"I think it's good if they have them. It's all bullshit when they do have them. They last about five minutes. There wasn't much to it."

****

"Well...the evaluations...I personally don't like them because I didn't have any done at the end of the semester--only in the middle. They asked me questions about how much I liked the program."

****

"I love them. That is especially with Professor _____, He just has a certain thing over people--most people. From the way he sits and looks at you you feel that you are accepted and can talk about anything. You could tell him you're on drugs and he won't scream or anything--like yell two thousand times. He's a very good person to talk to and I like talking to teachers who are warm and

exceptional or whatever. It makes you listen to the teacher."

****

"They sound good but I found out that they don't do anything. The conferences achieve nothing. They don't get around to anything important. I mean we had nice talks but they didn't achieve anything. I knew what I had to do before I walked in. I guess some people don't."

****

"It's a good idea. If you have some problems with something it's good to have one person available to answer your questions or help you out with something."

****

"The way they do it is absurd. My evaluation was with a member of the faculty that I had had no interaction with. I expected her to be harder on me because she didn't know my work. I could just sit there and act intellectual with her. She didn't really care that much about it. But besides this evaluation in the Core Course, the evaluations in the seminars were great."

****

"I never had one. I think I remember having one...or two. Like I said, I think I was up in the air."

****

"I like it because you get to know the teacher's thinking about the way you were in class. You get to hear from the teacher about how you were as a student. It's not just a grade or a test...and it helps you."

****

"I really thought most of it was a lot of trash. I can honestly say that it was beneficial. But some of them...you got in there and they could really talk to you. I'll tell you what this whole program is about. You're going to sit down with your teacher and discuss what it is all about. I went to this teacher and she told me that because she didn't know me very well she couldn't grade me very much. It lasted two minutes. She said like nothing to me. And I mean it was like nothing! On the other hand, if you go to one of the other teachers you get a lot out of it. There were one or two that I know that would sit down with me and listen. Another thing I didn't like was that some of the teachers almost seem too busy for you. There were always meetings and you never could find them. There was always a line outside the door and you had to wait six days...it was crazy."

****

"I enjoyed it. I thought it was good because I got to know pretty much all the teachers. I use the word "personally" lightly but it let me know what they thought of me as a student. You're like a person sitting there--not like Main Campus where nobody knows anybody."

****

"I didn't have any."

****

"Individual conferences I think are good. I think it's good for a person to be able to talk to their professor but it should not be mandatory. I don't like being told I have to speak to this person because a course is over. If I'm interested, I'll go back to talk to my professor anyway. But being told--I don't see the sense of it. I'm in college and rules should be over with. I do it or I don't do it. It's up to me! You know, I'm paying all this money."

****

"I didn't care for it. Just from regularly speaking with_____ I knew where I was. And then they sign me up to talk to _____. We didn't get along. I want to talk to somebody I can talk to--not somebody who is going to tell me what to do...you know."

****

"I thought that was very helpful. It showed you what you needed help on and what you did well on. Very helpful."

****

"I think it's good but it's mostly all on your own. They're there but you have to go to them. You know what you're going to say and what you want to do. But it is good. With a few of them there's always a barrier--always that gap between you. It's good because at least they are human and they talk."

****

"I think the individualized conferences were good. I like the specialized attention they gave you. Not many Main Campus teachers do that but I have come across a few that do. They've even gone as far as to give me their home phone number. There are a few that care. You just have to be lucky I guess. You really have to care but it helps to know that someone else cares too."

****

"I haven't had contact with that. I've never had one with each individual teacher. In other words, you have an advisor and you have an evaluation advisor. Mine was _____. You know...after each quarter we would evaluate together."

****

"I like it because...uh...to me...these people understand the problems of the students and they are there to help you--to advise you. And the people coming into Special Studies need someone to help them adapt to college and to ease the transition from high school to college."

****

"We didn't have conferences. Well, in some cases we did but not with each faculty member--maybe just one or two. It was like a madhouse with people running around and they couldn't sit down and talk. It sort of turned me off. I heard that last year, from a couple that went here, it was a lot smaller program. And it sounded

like it was a lot better and I can see that."

****

Interview Question # 6

"Do faculty members spend enough time with you?"

"Yeah! More than enough. That's one thing they are very good about--as long as they're not with somebody they're always open."

****

"Yeah if you want them to. If you have a problem and go and ask them to help they really get involved. Sometimes they're very busy."

****

"I always got most of the time I asked for."

****

"They spend a lot of time with us. But if you didn't know they were so cramped with this or that, they don't. However, on the other hand, as compared to Main Campus, they do. It's hard because you always feel you're cutting off because they have to do this or that. I've spent most of the time with professors in Special Studies than anywhere else. That I will say."

****

"Yes. From their point of view I'm sure that in the beginning they felt they spent too much time with me. I used to go to _____all the time with things that had nothing to do with school. It's great being able to drop in at the office. The other faculty will go out of their way to help you understand what you're studying."

****

"I guess if you had the time to sit and wait when they had the time, I then guess that they would. But you had to be there when they had the time. They weren't always available which is the idea I got."

****

"Some faculty members did and some faculty members didn't."

****

"Definitely! As a matter of fact, sometimes you're trying to avoid a certain faculty member and they don't push you or hound over you."

****

"Well, I don't know. I never really wanted to spend too much time with them. If I ever wanted to find them I could but not so for my advisor."

****

"Yeah. I'd say the one that I've gotten closest to is _____. He's like a father to all of us."

****

"Faculty spends enough time with you if you want it. Myself, I didn't spend the time. I know a lot of people in Special Studies that spent most of the first semester in their office--pulling their hair out if they needed someone to talk to. Like I said, myself, I didn't go. But if you needed help, it was there. They tried to give you the help you needed. Their help was good for students who needed it."

****

"If you want to spend time with the faculty, they will spend it with you. They don't go up to you and ask."

****

"No because there's too many people. Our Core had fifty in each one and there were only four faculty members for each Core. They just can't spread themselves thin. What they need is shorter courses. I mean to say that they need smaller classes."

****

"I think they are always there if you want them. It depends on the student. A lot of teachers take on personal problems too. It's not just plain school, they take on life! They'll talk to you about any problem you have."

****

"You can always find someone to talk to."

****

"Yes. I don't spend enough time with the faculty."

****

"I would say so. Well...it depends on the individual. Dr. _____would."

****

"It's like I said before, they're open if you want to go to them. The idea is that you have to want to see them. They just don't try to make the first move."

****

"Yeah. I think they spend sufficient time. They're always there when you need them."

****

"You get to know them pretty well. They're always around the lounge and if you want to know them you can. It's all up to you."

****

"I think they do but the students themselves aren't that interested in making contact. They're freshmen and they'll find out for themselves. It's good."

****

"With me? Uh...I don't think so. There wasn't that much communication 'cause they...uh...the teachers had so many students to direct their energies to. It got kinda spread thin."

****

"At times yes and at times no. It's very very hard because the faculty is very limited for the amount of students there are. They're just really busy. They are doing interviews now. Even when Professor _____is very busy, I can go to him and no matter what he's doing he'll sit down and listen. That's very important."

****

"If I wanted help I could have gotten it. They usually have time."

****

Interview Question # 7

"Are faculty members appropriate role models?"

"To a point. Some of the faculty members are too strict. A lot of the time they pursue everything too deeply. They're not open to suggestions from students. It just seems that they're teaching us what they want to teach more than it being a sort of two way thing of what we want to learn."

****

"I could relate with them. There were one or two I could never get along with. One of the two professors I really didn't like. The professor was wrapped up in being in the status of professor. The others liked teaching and also human at the same time. She was so wrapped up in herself that she couldn't relate to me at all. That's why I didn't like her. I was talking to my friends in the same course and they felt the same way."

****

"No, not at all. When you get to be a professor many times you are so into one subject. Like you don't talk about anything else. Or if you do, everything is related to what is done in class. It's ridiculous. There are other things in the world. And you don't argue with _____. He'll talk rings around you. I had this thing once in the Core Course. He said if you really want to work and be an excellent student, you won't worry about the marks. You can be an excellent student and really want to work but you want to know what your mark is. Especially if you're in law or pre-med. I don't care what you say, you still want to know. He was arguing and told me no. Once he takes a stand he really doesn't give you a reason. And that's ridiculous. That's why there can't be role models because they're on one path and they consider you close minded."

****

"Sure! Why not? I don't know. I like teachers who are more human beings and less machines. I get very turned off by professional detachment. They're good. They relate to students well, on the whole."

****

"They're all right. Like in my last Core, the teachers just came down on the students with a negative attitude. When you came into this, you were told the teachers were ones you could talk to but they came on as something better than us and they were going to show us who's smarter."

****

"I think so. I would consider them all good people. I can't think of why they wouldn't be. They try hard and relate to students in everything. That's a weird question..."

****

"Yes. Well, there was one I didn't hit it off with right away. I don't think she is an appropriate role model. Nobody says anything but now that I've had

that thing, it's changed my attitude. Let everyone experience it for himself. They have the right to."

****

"Some of the teachers in Special Studies are appropriate role models but some of the teachers are nervous. They giggle at things...I don't want to mention names but it's ridiculous."

****

"Certain ones I would say. It depends on the person. There are professors that are real good and you wouldn't mind modeling yourself after them. But there were others that were totally whacked out as far as I'm concerned. For example, _____in no way do I feel should be a college professor. She is really schized out. She can like you one minute and hate you the next. She will flip out over a stupid and silly thing. I think she's into a role--the college professor role. She is not herself. I don't feel she is at ease in front of the class. I think she just feels that she is THE professor. She should be more down to earth."

****

"Yes, Definitely. They all are because they have their fields. They're perfect models for following. Everyone can relate to one of them in some way."

****

"Yes. I don't necessarily think that a teacher should be a role model or try to set an example."

****

"Role models? I really can't answer that 'cause some people look at others as models but personnally I don't look at people as models."

****

"No. None of them are quite what I'm going to model myself after. Although I think that Dr. _____ is an intelligent man. I guess to me he is just one of the teachers."

****

"Some of them. Some of them I really can't stand, some of them I really have a great dislike for and some of them I think have a great idea going."

****

"Depends on what you mean by a role model. By them acting human they seem like more of a friend--they're outside of being role models. Like when you talk to _____ it takes him out of the role of a professor."

****

"That's hard to say because each one represents something different. They all have different attitudes, different ideas and different ways of teaching. I guess out of all the students in the fall, I could identify which students identified with which teachers. In other words, which ones they've picked as role models. It's strange and I was very surprised by it but it's true. It really is true and a lot of them pick _____ because he is a god image to them. A lot of kids call him god, just joking around but I think there's a little subconscious truth to it."

****

"What kind of question is that? Do you mean do I think they're like worth emulating and that sort of thing? Well...uh...um...there's something totally absurd about this question. Were they appropriate? From my point of view...definitely not. Period. Wait! Could I clarify that? I thought the people were civilized, nice people but I didn't think they were so far out that I was totally in love with what they were. Period."

****

"Mmm...yes, I think so."

****

"Leave that one blank. I don't know--some of them are good, some of them, you know..."

****

"What do you mean? (question was explained)...I never thought about that. No. I wouldn't want to model myself after any of them. That's like a difficult question. I don't know how to attack it. It attacked me. No. I wouldn't really model after them."

****

"No. I don't look up to them or idolize them to the point where I would model myself after any of them."

****

"This is a tough question to answer. They were in a unique sense that compared to New College, the professors there aren't as friendly as the professors here. Over there they tend not to associate with the students. But here it's a house of a different color. I think it's too much of a close relationship because here's men and women who are 15 to 20 years older than the kids and they're trying to be friends with them and I think that's a little bit unreal."

****

"They're not you and I'm not taking examples. Morals are not included in this conversation. You are always learning."

****

Interview Question # 8

"How much contact do you have with fellow Special Studies students? New College students? Main Campus students?"

"A lot with Special Studies. New College itself seems kinda cold. Considering that the largest percentage of the school is Main Campus, I'd have to say I have a lot of contact with Main Campus students. That's just the way it is."

****

"Special Studies students...well...I had a lot when I was in Barnard Hall. I have a lot from New College. I still have a lot of friends from Special Studies. I know a few people from Main Campus."

****

"None at all from Special Studies. From the second week on they were all cliques and now I have New College. None at all from Main Campus. Oh, wait a minute. I do. The people on the Lacrosse team are all from Main Campus. So I guess you'd call that contact."

****

"Most of my friends this semester are from Main Campus and last semester they were from Main Campus also. But the people who are on Main Campus this semester--a few of them were in Special Studies. I'm only friends with about two New College students."

****

"When I was in the program, it's my own personality that, if I didn't bother with anyone else. Lot of my friends come from Special Studies and I have a lot from Main Campus. No New College friends."

****

"Not many Special Studies people are my friends. I never see New College students. Like I used to see friends that were in my Special Studies classes and my New College classes and I never see them now. Like I'll see them, like this guy that he was in this class of mine. I have more Main Campus friends than Special Studies or New College."

****

"A lot of kids from Special Studies. We met each other while in the program and we all came from the same place. We got to be close friends with each other. I know some New College but not close with them. Not too many Main Campus."

****

"One of the Special Studies students I became very good friends with. We're going to be roommates next semester. I myself are not open with people. I may appear so on the outside, but when it comes to being intimate with them, there are really only a few people that I become close with. I still think there's a barrier with New College. "Cause like even when you're talking with Main Campus

people, you say that you have Wednesday off and they'll say, "Oh, you're in New College." And then to make it even worse, you say you're in Special Studies and then they look at you. You know... I never had any conflict with anybody from Main Campus. I'm friends with everybody. And when I meet them I tell them I'm in SSP but I don't pick my friends by what division of the college they're in."

****

"I'm friends with everybody in my Core Course and I still know a lot of people who were in the other Core Courses. Most of the people I'm with a lot come from Special Studies. I'm not as friendly with New College people 'cause I haven't known them as long. But I get along with them. I've got a few friends on Main Campus."

****

"Yeah, I got friends in Special Studies. We hang around and eat lunch. Don't know that many at New College. The only students I know at Main Campus are the ones who have left Special Studies to go into it."

****

"Very little people in the Core Course because I didn't associate with them. I didn't like them. All my friends are on Main Campus. I don't know if I'm a snob or not but I didn't like them."

****

"For Special Studies, we talk and eat lunch together--but that's only when we see each other on campus. I know the Main Campus people who are in student organizations and hang out in student program offices."

****

"I see a certain few of Special Studies people off campus. I don't know New College from anyone else. All my close friends are Main Campus."

****

"Well, because I live on main campus, I would have more friends than somebody who would commute. Because I can call them up. Most of my friends were not in Special Studies. They were not even New College people."

****

"Oh, that's just like anything else. You know, you can meet outside of class. Close friends have nothing to do with Special Studies. There's a difference with New College. I'm a <u>New College</u> student and never was a <u>Special Studies</u> student. Most of my close friends are on Main Campus and that's the way I like it!"

****

"My friends are mainly centered at New College and Special Studies."

****

"I have more acquaintances than friends at Special Studies. I say hello to everyone but I don't associate with them. I associated with one girl from the program but we don't speak anymore."

****

"My best friend on campus is a Special Studies student. In general, I think we're normal kids that had one quirk or another. New College people are weird. They seem to be extremely cliquish but I guess it's to be expected in a division that size. I've met a few nice Main Campus students."

****

"Most of my friends are from Special Studies. I guess because at the beginning of the year we were all in the same boat. The people ARE different. They are more open-minded and you can relate to them better than New College. I have a lot of friends on Main Campus."

****

"I only became close to about five in SSP and we all said we didn't care for the Special Studies Program. Not close with too many New College students. Met a lot of Main Campus though. I like them."

****

"About half of my friends are from Special Studies. I have a couple of friends from New College. Many of my friends are from Main Campus."

****

"I have a lot from Special Studies. I'm a lot closer to Special Studies than Main Campus. I feel New College and Special Studies are the same. I find myself apart from Main Campus."

****

"Very few friends here at Barnard. I met Bill and I've been friends with him except sometimes I want to step on his face. I don't associate with anybody except Bill. No acquaintances at all at New College. I have a few friends at Main Campus."

****

"I have a complex about that. I haven't really established any ties with anyone. It's acquaintances, I don't want to go into the whole thing."

****

Interview Question # 9

"How valuable are writing workshops?"

"They're very valuable but I don't think they were stressed very much. Like they weren't worth any credits. That's what people are really looking for--credits! Everybody is just looking to get through and get out."

****

"They're very valuable because I wasn't prepared for the amount of writing papers. They really helped but they should have been more than once a week."

****

"I did pretty well in the writing workshops. I started well and finished well and my writing had improved that much. I went to a private boarding school last year and the English requirements were pretty tough. It's like a paper a week there. The writing workshops were good."

****

"It depends. For me it was very valuable. I came to college and didn't know how to write and I learned the skills I needed to write a good paper."

****

"They're valuable. They're really good. I've really improved my writing. Have more of them -- for credit."

****

"I really think that the best part of the whole program was that. It's the only book I have kept. I got a lot out of it. I really wish we had more of it. The amazing thing was that it was a haphazard thing; no one really knowing when it was going to be. They really pulled it off well."

****

"Um...I didn't go to any of them. I just did the work and handed it in. It's good because at the time I was doing a lot of papers. It was useful as far as the mechanics was concerned. Now I just sit down and formulate a paper."

****

"Very valuable. I got a lot out of it. I've always hated writing but I don't anymore."

****

"Very simple. If you do the work and come to class prepared, they're very valuable. But if you don't do anything like I did, then it's a bunch of bullshit. I did a big paper and got little out of it. I should have done more."

"They were good. All through high school I wrote papers on something that was from all those textbooks. You just wrote it from textbooks. Now I can write. So I think it's really valuable."

****

"I think they helped me a lot. And I definitely think that when you go to college and you have to start writing a lot of papers, that it helps to know what you're doing wrong. I think it's good."

****

"Oh...I think they're really valuable. They are the best thing of the program. I think it's the base of the program."

****

"They're totally a waste of time. Definitely. You definitely just can't pick up the fundamentals or whatever they are trying to do. It didn't improve my writing. The only thing that improves my writing is writing. We didn't do much of that. Period."

****

"Writing workshops...personally I think I didn't like them. They got to be boring. It did teach you certain things--certain things that you learned in high school. It did help you with papers. But it got to be boring after awhile."

****

"That's a bad question. I didn't like it. Personally, I think they're a bunch of bull. It's very boring. My grammar is fairly good, my vocabulary is good and I really felt like deja vu. I felt like I was reliving my 7th grade grammar class."

****

"For some people I can see how it could be valuable but I didn't get much out of it. I went there in all but it was kind of a joke at times. It was very frustrating because some people there didn't take it seriously. They didn't want to be there."

****

"Writing workshops are valuable, I think for people. After you've had your paper torn apart in Core, the first person you wanted to see was the writing teacher."

****

"With some professors the workshops might have been valuable but not with the ones I had. I had a class who always fooled around and stuff. We never really got anything accomplished. I think if you would take it for credits and if you would lose credits for not showing up, more people would pay attention and do what they were told to do."

****

"They were good but I think they could have been smaller. Some of the people didn't care. There was so much fooling around that you couldn't get anything done."

****

"Golden. Writing Workshops are great, I tell ya'. If I could have taken it again I would have loved it. I was terrible at organization but Professor _____ really helped me. I think that was the best part of Special Studies."

****

"That's a hard question... I never went--for personal reasons. The class to me was more or less a joke."

****

"Well, to be quite frank and candid, I think it's a rehash from high school. It's all explained in the book. The time could have gone to a lot of different areas."

****

"If Writing Workshops were conducted properly they would be really good. I did gain knowledge from it but a small amount. All you have is one professor arguing with one of the students."

****

"Very...Very, Very...Very, Very, Very, Very, Very, Very good! Places like to go to better your writing. They gave me a good book-- I got a good book. She taught me a lot of things. She taught me how to better my writing and improve a lot of mistakes that I found I made and didn't even know."

****

Interview Question # 10

"What would you like to see changed in the Special Studies Program?"

"Wow. I guess the attitude of some of the students and the teachers. The teachers want everything to be too strict--want everything in a rigid pattern. It should be required thing to talk to your advisor 'cause we all kinda slack off."

****

"The grading system. I would love to see that changed because I feel that they ask for too much and the space that they give you to do certain things is just not enough time to do it. They take a credit away for attendance. A credit away for lateness...little minor things which I feel has nothing to do with it. If a student wants to learn they are going to do it. I don't think threatening to take away credit or threatening to deny them the right to continue at the university is going to make them come to classes or learn any faster. It's

just something I feel that they have to want to do. It contradicts what they want to do. I think if you really want to do something--you'll do it! This is like another pressure they have over you. I really dislike the grading system. The program itself is an excellent program. It gives students with low SAT scores and high school records a chance to prove that they are worthy of a chance to go to Hofstra University."

****

"I don't know...even though it was strict, you had to go everyday and all, It kinda gets you on the ball to start out with. Most of the things I didn't like in the beginning--like the strictness. Now I think it was there for a purpose."

****

"I would like to see Special Studies having a smaller enrollment and longer weeks. When I say longer weeks I mean 16 week sessions. Have more individual attention too. I don't know...a million things could be done."

****

"Core and the writing assignments and not so much the writing assignments. The writing assignments were good but their critical analysis of it could definitely be lightened a little bit because many a paper I could hand in that would have passed in any other course. But because it was Special Studies and we had to be the perfect students to come out of Special Studies, because everybody was watching Special Studies. So we had to be excellent in writing a paper. And they even told you they will not accept it if it wasn't perfect. Professor _____ said that it had to be perfect many times."

****

"I'd like to see a more realistic and applicable program instead of the Core Course. Basically the program is antiquated--it isn't worth much. It didn't teach you much of anything that could be applied to Main Campus. I'd kind of like to see realistic evaluations of teachers because I feel Professor _____ section was extremely inadequate. I know it failed to keep my attention that also goes for my peers. I feel the course should be more relevant to what people are actually studying that to what Special Studies desires to teach. I'd like to go down to the price of the regular college because the price is simply outrageous. I mean if kids could have got into Howard or Harvard, they would have gone there. It's an extremely expensive program with no warranting for that expense. I mean the materials weren't that extravagant. They presented no audio visuals. I don't see why it was so much."

****

"The size of the enrollment. That's gotta be changed. That's like the main thing. It should be looked into. Special Studies has been a failure pretty much. I think it's been a definite failure because you had people coming in from high school who were disinterested. They still are."

****

"The double standard. For example, say a teacher is lecturing on feelings or emotions and she is saying that people should not look at others as they are reflected upon themselves--as what your role is and what they are. They should loook at people and accept them for what they are. And then all of a sudden,

you go to that teacher and you tell her you don't have the paper and you ask for an extension. And she tells you no."

****

"I think it should be enlarged even though it would probably be detrimental. First of all, the image that's portrayed in the office itself is not very great. The office should be changed around because when people come in for interviews it looks like a dump."

****

"I can't think of anything right off...Oh, I would like to see it be a little less, a little bit less mandatory in attendance. I think mandatory attendance is a good idea for a lot of people there but it just doesn't fit with me too well. I would have gone to classes anyway. But everytime I wanted to take a day off, I had to go through a big guilt trip about it. That's about it."

****

"I think more togetherness--getting to know people. Not like parties but getting to sit down and talk with others. I didn't know anybody in Core B. I think the Cores should meet. They just had a picnic that I didn't go to. I think the instructors should be a little more in tune with college life--especially in Core B. They seemed to treat us like children and I don't think they should have. They should have a course on exam taking. That and how to write papers. And they also think the tour of the library was good. That should be mandatory."

****

"The only gripe I have is those four teachers--you know, their negative attitudes."

****

"I think the only thing that bothers me is being separated from Main Campus which is what the whole program was about. I felt excluded from Main Campus. I don't meet many people and that's why I try to get away from New College and Special Studies. Being around the Core Course you only meet that bunch of people."

****

"Well, they doubled the program. They took a hundred kids in and they're not prepared for that. The Core Course is supposed to have 25 students but it has fifty. Get rid of the Cores. I don't like being told what to take."

****

"That's a difficult question. I don't know. I never really thought about it. At this point I can only say I'm happy with the program and it did a lot for me."

****

"My biggest complaint is a communications kind of thing. I have a lot of problems and they didn't get things through to me. They should come across more clearly. Also the availability of people. They should have a schedule or something."

****

"I like to see that Core Courses ended completely. They're a total waste. I came and bitched for a week about them and my friends are sick of them. The material in Core didn't relate to anything. Professors have this great way to manipulize anything they want and to show you how to see it their way. And you can argue with them for ages."

****

"Too many students in the Core Courses. Period."

****

"The teacher should try to get on a one-to-one basis with the student. In Core A and Core B they repeated themselves."

****

"Everything. No, the teachers shouldn't be changed. Nothing should be changed. Everything should remain the way it is. I have no qualms at all. No change whatsoever...it's a perfect thing...beyond my wildest dreams."

****

"Nothing really."

****

"Well, I'd like to see the courses expanded more. At Special Studies they really don't need to be tough with the kids."

****

There was four good teachers and too many subjects. You didn't really have enough time to get into it."

****

Interview Question # 11

"What has benefited you most in the Special Studies Program?"

"The teachers really cared about me. When I came to school I hadn't picked up a book in five years. I mean literally picked up a book. They really helped me. My only problem is that I've got to learn that when it's time to work and when it's time to screw. I have to develop a pattern because it's something new to me."

****

"I think the writing because I've really had to make use of it. And I think the discipline because it really helps to put you on the right track again."

****

"Well, I'll tell ya. At first, _____in particular, he was really encouraging and supportive. He more or less helps you see what you are doing. It sounds like I really fell in love with him. He was just really helpful."

****

"Suppression of all my anxieties. It's made me become a good person. I've learned a lot of information and I've learned there are a lot of good people out there. I was educated...I learned a lot of things."

****

"It gave the basis of an idea of how college life is. I don't know...like I didn't actually work my hardest this year. I have too many disturbances outside of school. You know, like my girlfriend. She's a senior in high school and when you're a senior you got no work. She got out at 11:00 every day. I was seeing her and then my friends from around the area. The Core Course wasn't bad. The thing I enjoyed about it was it gave me a basis of what courses to take. I know they can't cover everything but they should give something to business or science majors."

****

"I think the Core Courses. The Core Courses I enjoyed the most as an introductory thing. They really started you off on the right foot."

****

"The majority of people in Special Studies are just procrastinators but not Professor _____. A lot of us put things off. But anyway..."

****

"The Writing Workshops. That was it. Anything else I learned there wasn't relevant to what I want to do on Main Campus. All in all, it's decent. It should be recommended over a College of Basic Studies. It should be recommended over going to a two-year school and then switching to a four-year school."

****

"Learning about people and learning about myself a lot. I got to know I'm kind of lazy. Am I lazy! I got to know I'm lazy and I got to know that I don't like writing too much. I realize I have the intelligence and am capable of doing the work. It's just that I find things like going to the Rat more important than doing my paper on time. So, um, I realized a lot of things about myself from watching people around me."

****

"I think getting acquainted with college life. Like helping to get a start in it--getting to know the ropes."

"Something really good. It's given me a chance to go to a decent college. I got into other colleges but this is probably better. It was my first choice. I could have gone to Boston University but one of my friends goes there and says it's terrible. It's like a prison--like high school. Special Studies, New College is not like that. True it is confining. You don't meet people on Main Campus but they don't treat you that way. I feel at ease there."

****

"The only thing I can think of is the Writing Workshop. Otherwise you can learn anything you know in New College or Main Campus. You know, but, um, she took time and she helped."

****

"Special Studies was important because it got me into Hofstra. And like, it's good for me now that I'm here. I enjoy Hofstra and my friends are at Hofstra. I would never have gotten here without Special Studies. Whether I could have made it without Special Studies is something different."

****

"The thing that was most important to me was learning how to write better."

****

"I guess having to do the amount of work that they gave you got me started off right. I learned how to do work and stuff. They made you read--they didn't make you read--but they test you on it so you had to read. I find you can get away with it easier in New College but you find out in the end that you're only fooling yourself. You learn a lot better in Special Studies."

****

"How much I want to learn."

****

"I'm not sure if the Cores have benefited me in any particular way except when I was exposed to various types of writing."

****

"I've learned to write a little better at Special Studies. Not as much as I could have. I've learned to handle professors when I had to."

****

"One would definitely be the writing stuff. That really helped me a lot. I think the idea of getting a second chance--that was really good. I wish more teachers would do that. That's a way to learn."

****

"They helped me make the transition easier by trying to make me feel more comfortable with other students--like the picnic. They had that for instance. They tried to make you get rid of the feeling that you're surrounded by strangers. I'm glad I went into the program. I had taken some summer courses at another college and gotten B's and B+'s and felt that I could do college without them. I was also afraid of the label of SSP. But if I hadn't gone in I would have had more problems. They tried to reduce the tension by things like p/f grading. Then they give you a choice of New College or SSP gradually easing you into the college experience. Now I can face Main Campus."

****

"Walking in the closeness of the teachers. You have the confidence of knowing that there's someone who's behind you."

****

"It got me to study more. You know, they make it that you have to study. You always have to do all the reading and everything and you can't get away from that."

****

"They gave me a chance by accepting me."

****

SUMMARY

The main student complaint seems to be that the size of the Core Course is far too large... Most of the students entered the program with the idea that there is a low student-faculty ratio. Although four teachers are always present in the Core Course, which in theory should make up for the large size of the class; what it seemed to amount to in the opinion of many students, was a class of fifty in which three extra teachers sat in to offer occasional comments and, as one student put it, "collect coffee money." It just didn't take the place of the intimacy and dynamics found in the small class.

Many students appeared to enjoy the "taste of everything" offered by the four different segments of the Core Course. They also like discussing the different perspectives of one subject. However, even more students, and often the same ones just mentioned, expressed dissatisfaction with the length of the course, and the amount of subjects and material covered. Eight weeks appears not to be enough time to cover four subject areas even if they are inter-related. Students were often confused and bewildered by the sequence, which they often interpreted as fragmented and not inter-related. A frequent complaint was that two weeks allowed no time for exploring a subject in depth. As soon as a student was beginning to get used to a professor and take an interest in the subject, the professor and the subject changed.

The four day week was popular with almost everyone for reasons ranging from, "it was a day off" to "it was a day to study." But the eight week courses were often found to be too short, again, this related to the discussion of the Core Course. Some students suggested semester length course work, while still others preferred the variety, intensity and flexibility offered by the shorter sessions.

When asked about their feelings on being a probationary student, many students were not even aware that they were. For the most part, the reactions to probationary status were mild, some expressed resentment, some apprehensiveness, some felt it motivated them, and a few had no feeling whatsoever.

Almost everyone liked the concept of having a personal conference with the professor after the course, and quite a few students reported they had a good experience with it. But there were some who were very disappointed with the superficiality of their conference, and some who had none at all. The students reported that some professors made only a few trivial remarks to students they did not know very well. This leads into the next question about the amount of time faculty spend with the students. The most frequent answer was that faculty will spend the time with you if you actively pursue spending the time with them. But there were some students who found that the faculty were too busy, unavailable, and difficult to contact.

A second major issue was the way in which students related to the faculty. For the most part, students gave very positive opinions of the faculty, some even expressed great affection for certain professors. They seemed to have enjoyed the unusually warm relationships and the caring attitude of the faculty. But a problem was expressed repeatedly which seems to stem from a discrepancy in the attitude the teachers assume toward the students. The faculty appear to go out of their way to give students a new, and less rigid outlook on education, and relate to them on a friendly first name basis. On the other hand, the students feel the faculty presents them with a set of instructions that are as strict as those in high school. Students appear to resent this and are hurt by the indifferent professor whom they had come to trust. It's not that the general consensus is to do away with all the rules and deadlines, but rather to relax them to a sensible and fair adult level.

The third important point the interviews disclosed is with regard to the Writing Workshop. Aside from a few people who found it boring, this part of the program received the most emphatically positive response. Very many students found it valuable and said that it helped them to deal with the later courses which they encountered. Quite a few said that it should be the basis of the program or that it was the one aspect of the program which they "got anything out of." Some expressed a desire that it be given more importance (that they receive credit for it) and that it meet more frequently and with a higher degree of seriousness.

The great amount of writing was an aspect of the program that although distasteful at first, was looked back upon by many students as being the most beneficial to them in the long run. This would include the Workshop and rewriting papers. The ability to write and the self discipline that the students gained from meeting the demanding criteria of the program gave many students the confidence they needed to meet their future educational endeavors with assurance. Many of the students said they were grateful for the chance to prove to themselves and others that they could do it.

APPENDIX A

SPECIAL STUDIES INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

DIRECTIONS: Please mark your answer to each question directly on the questionnaire. Read each question carefully and place a check (or X) in front of the appropriate answer. When you are asked to write in an answer, please do so in the space provided.

1. What is your academic area of interest?

   _____

   _____

2. If you are employed, write the title or description of your job below.

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

   How many hours per week do you work? _____

3. Do you live in a dorm or commute to Hofstra?

   ____Live in dorm

   ____Commute to Hofstra

4. How far do you plan to go in school?

   ____I plan to get a B.A. or B.S.

5. In terms of your personal satisfaction, how important are the following Special Studies Program activities? Circle,

   1 Important

   2 Don't know! can't decide

   3 Not Important

   1 2 3 Discussing ideas with faculty.

   1 2 3 Discussing ideas with fellow students.

   1 2 3 Personal and social relationships with other students.

   1 2 3 The Core Course

   1 2 3 Close student-faculty relationships.

   1 2 3 Rewriting papers, exams, etc.

   1 2 3 Signing a contract when you entered the program.

   1 2 3 Credit/no credit grading system.

   1 2 3 Peer teachers

   1 2 3 Required attendance in classes.

6. In what areas do you feel you need more help or advice?

   ____Developing study habits/organizing time.

Special Studies Interview Schedule (cont'd)

____I plan on professional school (medicine, law, etc.)

____I plan on a Master's degree

_____I plan on a Ph.D. or Ed.D.

_____Other plans(please describe)

_____
_____

_____Planning an academic program.

_____Choosing a major and a vocation.

_____Personal and social relations.

_____Increasing your writing skills.

_____Personal problems.

_____Planning for after you leave Special Studies.

_____Other(please describe)_____

_____

_____

7. How many hours do you spend studying each week?

Preparation time_____

Reading time_____

Writing time_____

8. What campus activities do you participate in?

_____

_____

_____

_____

A. How do you feel about team teaching in the Core Course?

B. How do you feel about the 4 day week/8 week courses?

C. How do you feel about being a probationary student?

D. How do you feel about individual conferences with each faculty member at the end of a course?

E. Do faculty spend enough time with you? Are they appropriate role models?

F. How much contact do you have with fellow Special Studies students? New College students? Main-campus students?

G. How valuable are writing workshops?

H. What would you like to see changed in the Special Studies Program?

I. What has benefited you most in the Special Studies Program?